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By Eric L. Maldonado

Any fee due as a result of this paper, not covered by an enclosed check, may be charged on Deposit Acct. No.50-1290.

Attorney Docket No. FUJO 18,157 (100794-11592)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor: Nobuyoshi NINOKATA, et al.
Serial No.: 09/753,698
Filed: January 3, 2001
Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR...
Examiner: Hosain T. Alam
Art Unit: 2155
Con. No.: 1587

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March 23, 2004

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

SIR:

In order to comply with discretionary rules 37 CFR §§1.97 and 1.98, attached hereto is a copy of Form PTO-1449 and a copy of the documents listed thereon. This document contains information in which the Examiner may consider to be important in deciding whether to issue a patent in the instant application.

As this statement is being filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action, no fee is due.

Also attached is a copy of the European Search Report dated January 14, 2004 from the corresponding European Patent Application. All of the documents listed in Form PTO-1449 appear in the European Search Report. The European Search Report explains the relevancy of the documents listed in the Form PTO-1449.

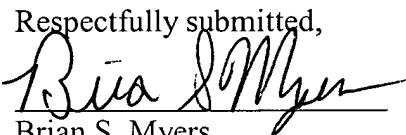
For documents written in a language other than English, English language abstracts are annexed thereto explaining relevancy in accordance with 37 CFR §1.98 (a)(3).

Each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this information disclosure statement.

The present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in compliance with 37 §CFR 1.56 as an Examiner might consider any cited document important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, but the citation of each document is not to be construed as an admission that such document is necessarily relevant or prior art. No representation is intended that the cited documents represent the results of a complete search, and it is anticipated that the Examiner in the normal course of examination, will make an independent search and will determine the best prior art consistent with 37 CFR 1.104 (a), and in the course of such search will review for relevance every document cited on the attached form even if not initialed.

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

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